

Subject: Deputation by Concerned Citizens of King Township to LSRCA Board 12/17/09

The deputation is in response to the Site Plan Application by Pristine Power to build a 393 MW gas fired peaking generator at 18781 Dufferin St., King Township, adjacent to village of Ansnorveldt.

To introduce myself: I am the Chair of Concerned Citizens of King Township founded in 1971. We are focused on protecting the natural environment and rural character of King Township. Our 300 family members have an interest in the long term protection of natural features such as wetlands, forests, protection of agricultural lands and maintaining the character and quality of life of the Township's small villages and farmlands. Throughout our engagement on this issue we have collaborated with other groups outside the Township such as MegaWHAT?, STORM, Greenbelt Alliance, Holland Marsh Growers' Association and many individuals outside the Township.

We have been very active in the whole process triggered by a January 2008 directive by the then Minister of Energy to build a gas-fired generator in northern York Region. The scope of our interest has included understanding the stated need, assessing the identified solution (namely a gas fired peaking generator), the process for identifying a developer and site, the process for validating the environmental impact of the selected option.

Why am I here today? The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority's mission is to provide leadership for the restoration and protection of the Lake Simcoe Watershed. Never, has your passion for protecting the health of the Watershed been so required.

Is this hyperbole? I don't think so given this assault on scientific environmental planning as represented by this particular project.

First, the proposal is to build on a flood plain. This particular flood plain and its surrounding area were inundated a mere 55 years ago when Hurricane Hazel went through. Katharine will be discussing this more.

Second, the proposal is to build infrastructure in the protected countryside of the Greenbelt and the very Government which introduced this legislation is playing deaf & dumb.

Third, the project has been assessed for environmental impact by the same process which is used for assessing a wind turbine! The Ministry of Environment is negligent in maintaining regulations which categorize this generator as having same risk profile in terms of environmental impact as renewable sources such as solar or wind turbines or a hydroelectric facility smaller than 200MW.¹

¹ Guide to Environmental Assessment Requirements for Electricity Projects, Ministry of Environment Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch, March 2001

Fourth and finally, the selection of the solution to the alleged gap in supply and the selected site has not been compared to alternatives in terms of environmental impact. The first solution proposed was an upgrade of a transmission corridor. It was dropped because of a well publicized public outcry. How does the environmental impact of that solution compare to a generator in Lake Simcoe watershed? How does the environmental impact of a generator in Ontario's vegetable basket compare to building it adjacent to the Armitage transformer which is the preferred technical solution? I do not know what the right solution is. What I am saying is that a Government with aspirations of a "green" legacy should have use this analysis in their decision making.

I do have high expectations of the Board of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. What is at stake is not just this generator. All conservation legislation is at risk of being bent and twisted in response to short term, profit driven private self interest.

To now speak to the site plan application before us. December 3 Ms Booth of the CA issued a report indicating that it was likely that the developer would be able to satisfy previously identified issues on the Site Plan Application but that there were two critical issues outstanding: 1st—safe access and 2nd--conformity with the Provincial Policy Statement.

I am going to focus on the Provincial Policy Statement.

The proponent has argued in their letter of December 1 to Ms Booth that she has committed a "fundamental error" with her focus on section 3.1.2 (d) which disallows development and site alteration "in a floodway regardless of whether the area of inundation contains high points of land not subject to flooding."² The proponent argues that the PPS needs to be read and considered as a whole.

I agree completely with the proponent...the whole PPS needs to be considered.

In the PPS there is a Vision statement for the Land Use Planning. "The Province must ensure that its resources are managed in a sustainable way to protect essential ecological processes and public health and safety, minimize environmental and social impacts, and meet its long-term needs"³

In another section: *Long term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being should take precedence over short term considerations.*⁴

² Provincial Policy Statement 2005, section 3.1.2(d)

³ PPS Part IV: Vision for Ontario's Land Use Planning System

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To quote from a section that identifies policies about development in rural areas in municipalities.

“development that is compatible with the rural landscape and can be sustained by rural service levels should be promoted; ...locally-important agricultural and resource areas should be designated and protected by directing non-related development to areas where it will not constrain these uses”⁵

Section 3 is rich in significance to the issue before us.

The opening of this section says: “Ontario’s long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being depend on reducing the potential for public cost or risk to Ontario’s resident from natural or human-made hazards. Development shall be directed away from areas of natural or human-made hazards where there is unacceptable risk to public health or safety or of property damage.”⁶

LSRCA has hi-lighted 3.1.2. (d).

In addition there is the policy that “Development shall not be permitted to locate in hazardous lands and hazardous sites where the use is: “an essential emergency service such as that provided by fire, police and ambulance stations and electrical substations, which would be impaired during an emergency as a result of flooding, the failure of floodproofing measures and/or protection works...”⁷ (emphasis added)

Given that the OPA and former Minister Smitherman told us that one of the purposes of this generator is to provide a back up to support northern York Region and Simcoe in case of the Claireville line being incapacitated due to natural disasters such as an ice storm, I believe that the generator is an “essential emergency service.” As an essential emergency service, it is not permitted in the selected site.

Finally, there is the very ironic point that the PPS says that “the official plan is the most important vehicle for implementation of this Provincial Policy Statement.”⁸ This is ironic as the

⁵ PPS Part V Policies 1.1.4.1 (d) (e)

⁶ PPS Part V Policies section 3

⁷ PPS Part V Policies 3.1.4 (b)

⁸ PPS Part V Policies 4.5

proponent, who has confirmed the need to address the whole PPS, has denied the need to address the Official Plans of King Township and York Region.

Board Members: I speak for every person in Ontario whose vision of the future includes healthy sustainable communities and local food supply we are counting on the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority to protect the watershed and to hold the Province accountable for respecting conservation legislation.

Before I turn it over to Katharine... a final thought. If there is anyone who is toying with the idea of enabling the York Energy Centre to be built I would ask them to consider that The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan calls for a climate change adaptation strategy to be developed by June 2011 for the Lake Simcoe Watershed. What are the mitigation measures for the greenhouse gases emitting from this generator at 3 tonnes/minute starting December 2011?

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